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Weekend, December 11-13, 2015 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

HEMSWORTH GETS HIS SEA LEGS

The actor hits the deck in Ron Howard's new aquatic epic. **20**

Surprise! Trump has supporters in Philly. **4**

Off-beat holiday shows to make you merry. **31**

SORRY, SHADY

Chip Kelly says he's sorry but LeSean McCoy is still steaming over his stunning trade to Buffalo. 34-35

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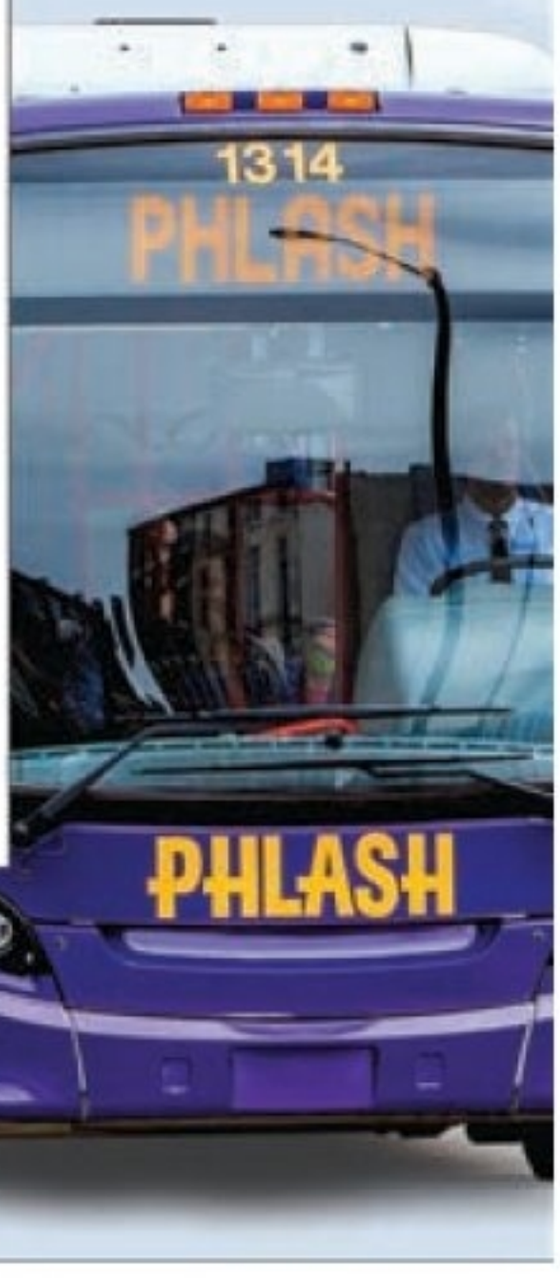
JANUARY 3



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US NORTHWEST STORMS

1 Residents of the Pacific Northwest were hit by fresh storms Thursday after the region received record-breaking rainfall that left two dead in Oregon and triggered widespread flooding, landslides, road closures and power cuts. Periods of heavy rain and fierce winds will continue across the Pacific Northwest and down into northern California. REUTERS

MUSLIM OFFICE THREAT

2 The U.S. Muslim advocacy group Council on American-Islamic Relations said Thursday its Capitol Hill office was evacuated by police after a foreign substance was received in the mail. The office received an envelope containing a note that read, "Die a painful death, Muslims," and a white powder, according to CAIR staff attorney Maha Sayed. "Our fear is at a pretty high level at this time, given the anti-Muslim rhetoric going on," said Sayed. REUTERS

GUNS IN CLASSROOMS

3 A University of Texas advisory committee has reluctantly recommended allowing handguns in classrooms when a state law goes into effect Aug. 1, 2016. The state's "campus carry" law allows people 21 and older with a concealed handgun license to carry handguns in classrooms. REUTERS

SYRIAN SOLIDARITY

7 Members of the Granny Peace Brigade presented a solidarity letter to Syrian grandmothers to Syrian refugee Yousef Abbara outside of the Ethical Society on Rittenhouse Square on Thursday.

MAIN PHOTO BY CHARLES MOSTOLLER, ALL OTHER PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

CHESAPEAKE FRACKING

4 The Pennsylvania Attorney General's office said it filed a lawsuit against Chesapeake Energy and its affiliates over claims that the companies underpaid landowners who leased land for fracking. The lawsuit alleges that the Oklahoma City-based oil and natural gas producer tricked landowners into signing leases in the Marcellus Shale region and paid royalties less than agreed upon. REUTERS

MEEK MILL IN COURT

5 Meek Mill was back in Philly court on a probation violation hearing related to a 10-year-old criminal case. His girlfriend, singer Nicki Minaj, testified at the hearing that she will help him meet his parole requirements. The judge took issue with Mill heading out of state to accept an award and turning in a "suspicious" urine test, reports said. SAM NEWHOUSE

PORT RICHMOND ATV FIRE

6 An ATV caught fire, which then spread to a nearby home in Port Richmond early Thursday morning. The incident occurred around 2:30 a.m. on the 3200 block of Emerald Street in the city's Port Richmond section. Investigators said an ATV parked near a home was leaking gas and eventually caught fire. MATT LEE

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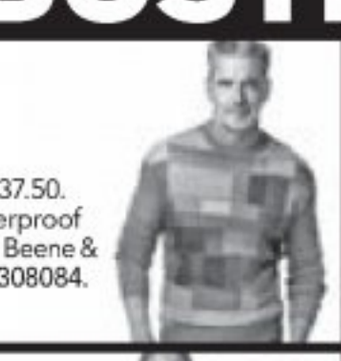

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Yes, Trump has Philly supporters

Think everybody in Philly hates Donald Trump? Think again.

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sam.newhouse@metro.us

Mayor Michael Nutter recently said he'd like to ban Donald Trump from Philadelphia. But former state Sen. Milton Street is in talks now to bring Trump to Philly.

"If Mr. Trump is going to come in here and we're going to set up businesses and hire people in the community to stop violence in the community, then I'm going to support him," Street said. "I'm not going to concern myself about the name of the candidate."

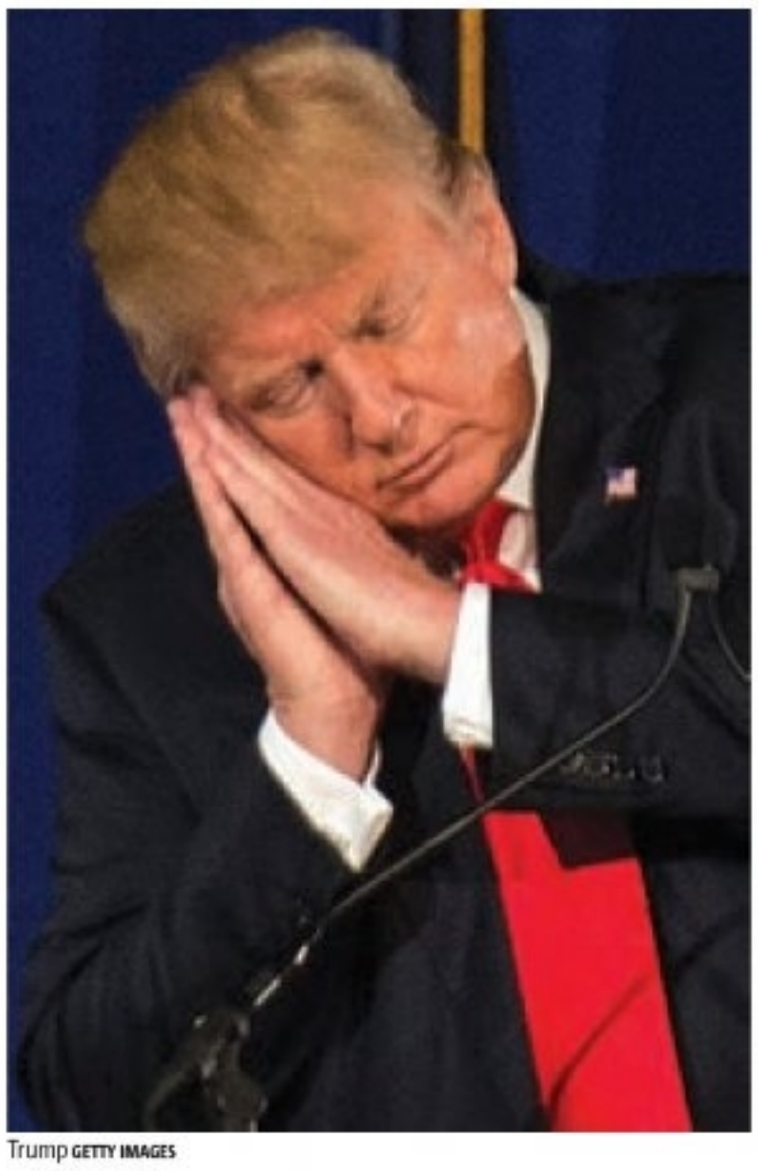
Asked if Trump would achieve those goals, Street responded, "I don't see why not, he's a billionaire."

Nutter, after an apparent anti-Muslim attack struck a Philadelphia mosque, went on a tear against Trump for his rhetoric that no more Muslims should be allowed into the U.S., calling him "dangerous" and "a cartoon clown" with a "message of hate" who should be banned from Philadelphia.

But at a clambake held by the Philly Republican City Committee in August, Trump was the candidate who won a straw poll of the 200 attendees with 30 percent of the vote, the Northeast Times reported.

Joe DeFelice, executive director of the Philadelphia Republican Party, said the party has not endorsed Trump, but that he is galvanizing citizens across the political spectrum.

"I do think that Donald Trump is tapping into a frustration that people have," he said. "I don't agree with everything Donald says, but I appreciate and respect the fact that he can say it. People may say he's saying things that are not American, but censoring him is not American."



Trump GETTY IMAGES

Al Taubenberger, a Republican recently elected as city councilman-at-large, said he thinks Trump's comments bashing ethnic groups and mocking people who oppose or disagree with him will doom his campaign.

"He shoots from the hip. That's great to some degree," Taubenberger said. "But some things he says are out of line and inappropriate. … He's not looking very presidential."

No formal presence has been established by Trump's campaign in Philly. But he got support from 23 percent of Pennsylvania Republicans in an October Quinnipiac poll and continues to lead the race nationwide. Locally, he has supporters — but they are cagey about sharing that information publicly.

"Our country is in a lot of trouble right now, and I trust he'll do something about it," said a Center City lawyer who supports Trump but declined to give his name due to job concerns. "I don't believe he has religious prejudice against Muslims. He is being treated unfairly. He's just saying that they shouldn't be let in unless you can prove beyond a shadow of a reasonable doubt that they're not terrorists."

Even some non-conservatives support Trump.

"I just want him to get in there so people will wake the f— up and say, 'What is going on in this country?'" said Tim Rowe, 46, from Fairmount, who said he's an independent who typically votes Democrat. "I don't like him personally. I think he's insane. But I want things to change."

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Please donate to the Metro Magic annual holiday toy drive during the 2015 holiday season.
In keeping with the holiday spirit of giving, Metro is once again launching Tony's Metro Magic, our annual toy drive for underprivileged children in Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

This year marks the seventh anniversary of the toy drive, which was renamed in memory of the man who oversaw the project for more than four years, Tony Metcalf, Metro's longest-running editor-in-chief. Metcalf passed away in 2013 from colon cancer at the age of 50.

Metcalf lit up every year as he saw the faces of children unwrap their holiday gifts. It is our goal to keep that magic alive. We are now asking readers to contribute what they can to Tony's Metro Magic.

Metro has created a wish list at the Target website that readers can access by going to www.metro.us and clicking on the Tony's Metro Magic logo.

From there, just choose the toys you wish to donate, pay online using Target's secure payment system. Your gifts, along with your name attached, will be delivered to Metro's offices in each city.

This season we hope you will remember the children who will spend the holidays in shelters or who may not have gifts to open. Even one small gift can make a big difference in a child's holiday season.

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Big changes on SEPTA Regional Rail lines

A SEPTA Regional Rail train. CHARLES MOSTOLLER

SEPTA is making big changes to its Regional Rail lines next week.

SAM NEWHOUSE
@scnewhouse
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Huge changes are coming next week to three of SEPTA's most heavily traveled Regional Rail lines.

SEPTA said the changes — specifically, splitting the Airport line from the Warminster and West Trenton lines on weekdays — are intended to increase "service reliability."

SEPTA Assistant General Manager Ron Hopkins reportedly called the changes the "most comprehensive schedule changes in well over 20 years."

"The Airport Line is currently linked to the Authority's West Trenton and Warminster Regional Rail Lines, two very long service lines," the transit agency said in a statement. "Service problems SEPTA experiences between West Trenton or Warminster and Philadelphia impact the Airport Line, which can cascade and cause delays to trains that are normally running on time."

The changes mostly affect passengers traveling from the suburbs to Philadelphia International Airport. Airport trains, which formerly terminated at suburban Regional Rail stations, are being modified, SEPTA said.

Beginning Monday, weekday Airport Line trains leaving Temple University between 6:13 a.m. and 9:13 a.m. and 3:43 p.m. and 6:43 p.m. will operate only between those two stations, SEPTA said.

Outside those windows — between 9:25 a.m. and 3 p.m., and after 7 p.m. — the Airport line will operate only between the Airport and Jenkintown-Wyncote.

West Trenton and Warminster trains will no longer go to 30th Street Station or the airport on weekdays. Riders on those trains who need to get to those destinations will need to transfer at Suburban or Jefferson Station.

All weekday trains will leave a few minutes earlier.

The changes have already caused some gripes from SEPTA customers.

"No more service to the airport during the week; no University City stops. No additional trains, just longer rides. How is this supposed to help?" one Warminster Line rider told Metro.

Visit septa.org for more information on the schedule changes.

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*That's in addition to up to $1 million already committed to the letters dropped off in-store and online through December 24th!

BRIEFS

Woman goes on trial for attack on gay couple

A Bucks County woman charged with attacking a gay couple in Center City began Thursday with one side painting the defendant as an innocent bystander and the other as an established homophobe, reports said.

Kathryn Knott, 25, was coming from a birthday dinner in Center City on Sept. 11, 2014 when the group she was with ran into a gay couple — Zachary Hesse, 28, and Andrew Haught, 27.

Gay slurs and obscenities were hurled, followed by shoving and punching during the encounter near 16th and Chancellor streets. Both gay men were injured, with Haught's eye socket and jaw broken.

Knott was charged along with two others, also Bucks County residents — Philip Williams, 25,and Kevin Harrigan, 27.

Williams and Harrigan both pleaded guilty to assault and conspiracy, and were sentenced to probation and ordered to perform 200 hours of community service with an LGBT organization. They were also banned from Center City during their probation.

In opening trial statements Thursday, defense attorney Louis R. Busico said "being present while some other people commit a crime is not a crime," according to Philly.com. He added that evidence will show that Knott didn't throw any punches and that the incident got out of hand when one of the gay men hit a woman.

Assistant District Attorney Allison Ruth said she will present tweets from Knott showing a history of her using homophobic language before the attack.

The defense will argue that the tweets were posted years before the assault and are being taken out of context, Philly Voice reported. METRO

Nadil Ibrahim Khalil and the Al Aqsa Islamic Society have received dozens of cards showing support after a pig's severed head was left in front of the building. CHARLES MOSTOLLER

Philly mosque 'overwhelmed' with support after incident

House of worship receives cakes, flowers and letters of support after anti-Muslim incident.

SAM NEWHOUSE
@scnewhouse
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Just days after an apparent anti-Muslim attack at a local mosque, neighbors and community members have responded to the incident with a huge display of support.

Since Wednesday, the Al Aqsa Islamic Society of Philadelphia has received huge quantities of flowers, candy and cakes in a show of support for the mosque that was attacked by an unknown individual earlier this week.

"It's overwhelming, in a good way," said Marwan Kreidie, executive director of the Arab American Development Corp. and spokesman for Al Aqsa, where the corporation has offices.

"It's amazing how many calls and messages we are getting from people, even from California and Australia," he said. "It reaffirms your faith in humanity."

Philadelphia Police have reported no developments in the investigation into who threw a pig's severed head out of a speeding red pickup truck early Monday at the door of Al Aqsa.

After the incident, Mayor Michael Nutter held a press conference to condemn the incident, and the flow of gifts began.

"We knew that those perpetrators aren't our neighbors, it wasn't from the community," Kreidie said. "There's hate all over, but its nice to see all this great support."

Al Aqsa is inviting its neighbors to a community barbecue at 3 p.m. this Saturday, Kreidie said.

"It reaffirms your faith in humanity."

Kreidie

The timetables they are a-changin'

Effective December 13, 2015, Airport Line Trains will operate on a new timetable meant to enhance service reliability. Weekday trains will no longer continue through service to Warminster and West Trenton Lines. Airport Line service still runs every 30 minutes, stops at every terminal and bags ride free.

Visit septa.org to learn more.

CAN THERE BE A LIBERAL ARGUMENT FOR GUNS?

ERNEST OWENS

The Ernest Opinion

Award-winning multimedia journalist Ernest Owens is a keen observer of social, LGBT and race issues in Philadelphia. Follow him @MrErnestOwens

My great-grandfather, Daniel Johnson, was a proud veteran and gun carrier.

He owned guns that were handed down by previous generations of sharecroppers that were once slaves across the Mason-Dixon line.

He passed away in his hometown of Marianna, Arkansas, in the Deep South, where I spent every summer as a child.

The guns were more than prized possessions. They were a responsibilty — as they would have been for any black man who legally owned a gun down there.

For decades, the Second Amendment didn't really apply to men who looked like my grandfather. Then and now, there is often a look of fear in the eyes of whites that sell a gun to blacks in America.

Marianna was no exception.

You might presume a gun owner from Arkansas — whatever his race — would be conservative, but my grandfather was a loyal Democrat who lived long enough to see our nation's first black president get elected.

Still, he never let go of those guns and now our family inherits them.

We are fairly liberal, but all the outcry for the total overhaul of gun possession leaves me conflicted — as is, I suspect, much of America.

Much of the rhetoric makes gun control a politicized issue that looks plainly partisan when in reality it's more complex than that.

Americans all throughout the nation — whether a Democrat or a Republican or from the West, or Northeast or South — have guns.

Throughout this cross-section our nation hunts and collects and goes to ranges and shoots skeet and does police work and obeys the law.

And the bad actors — those who use them to kill and rob — come from the full spectrum of political and regional ideologies as well.

That complicates matters.

It's not as simple to draw battle lines as with other controversial national issues, where there were clear divisions between the "yes" group and "no" group.

Guns are a completely different matter.

For example, the ACLU, a bastion of liberality whose purpose is to protect Constitutional rights, has no interest in protecting individual Second Amendment rights. Despite a Supreme Court ruling to the contrary, they maintain it is a "collective" right of the people, not a right of individuals to own guns.

And, as progressive as he has been on other issues, Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders is no proponent of strict gun control.

"I come from a state that has virtually no gun control and, thank God [knocks on wood], has a reasonably low crime rate," the Vermont senator said recently to Rolling Stone. "That is the culture of my state."

And that, for me, represents the often-ignored nuance in the gun policy debate.

I was born in Chicago, spent summers down South, and now live in Philly — places with different viewpoints on the subject. I've seen the spectrum of gun possession, good and bad.

And that's why consensus on national gun policy is hard to achieve; how people view guns is as varied as to how people culturally interact with one.

This simply isn't black and white, as it is often portrayed in the media. Just as much as it isn't a red and blue matter to divide down party lines.

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6-year-old boy gets 'bionic' hand, courtesy of 3-D printing

The "Transformer"-looking prosthetic is liked by kids.

Lucas Abraham CHRISTINAWILKY@ TWITTER

A 6-year-old Kentucky boy born with a malformed right hand because of a rare disorder has received what he called his best Christmas gift ever — a "bionic" prosthetic made from 3-D printing technology.

Lucas Abraham, who has wanted a working right hand since he was 2 years old, showed off the new prosthetic made by University of Louisville bioengineering students.

"It's better than every gift that I've ever had before," Lucas told a news conference at the university on Wednesday.

Gina Bertocci, a niversity of Louisville bioengineering professor, said Lucas' hand was the first created by the school for a child and that more could be produced. The university described it as "bionic."

The printer technology greatly reduces the manufacturing cost and the plastics used are similar to those in Lego blocks, allowing the devices to be produced in various colors, Bertocci said.

Children like it because it makes them look like a Transformer, she added, saying: "Everyone wants to show off their hardware."

The students received assistance from e-NABLE, a global volunteer group that designs and prints prosthetics.

Three hands composed of plastic, leather and wire were made to fit Lucas. He will keep two

> *"It's a pretty good Christmas gift."*
> Julie Abraham

and the university will retain the third for accreditation purposes, the school said.

Within minutes of receiving his new hand last week, Lucas was able to grasp a ball. He wore the hand to school and was able to shake hands and give his classmates high fives. It also will let him crash cymbals together in music class, Lucas said.

Lucas' grandmother Julie Abraham said he had shown more confidence in himself since receiving the hand. Abraham had written to the university in August asking if it could do something for him. REUTERS

BRIEF

About 800 children from Central America to be housed in Dallas area

About 800 immigrant children from Central America who have entered the United States will be moved to two campsites in the Dallas area over the coming days, local officials said.

Officials said the move was due to an increase in the number of unaccompanied minors who have entered the country illegally in the last few months.

Ellis County Sheriff Johnny Brown told a news conference on Thursday the campsite in his county, the Lakeview Camp and Retreat Center, will be patrolled around the clock and function like a mini city.

Figures recently released by U.S. Border Patrol show that it apprehended 10,558 unaccompanied children, mainly from Central America, who entered the United States illegally in October and November, about double the number over the same period last year.

Officials say rather than fleeing, many of the children seek out U.S. officials, surrender, and request political asylum, citing violence and endemic crime in their home countries.

The number of children rapidly escalated in the summer of 2014, totaling nearly 63,000 for the 10 months ended July 2014. Many were fleeing criminal gangs and drug-related violence at home.

Lakeview Camp, run by the Assemblies of God of North Texas, is due to care for 500 migrant youth. Another 300 Central American children will be housed at Sabine Creek Ranch, a Christian camp, in Rockwall County, the camps said.

Officials in Ellis and Rockwall counties said they received little notice from state and federal agencies of the arrivals.

Reverend Rick DuBose, superintendent of the Assemblies of God of North Texas, told the same news conference that his group was honored to give the children a place to stay for next three weeks.

"We didn't feel like there was any way we could turn them away and not care for them. We have the beds that are empty and the food that can be served," he said.

The children will then likely move into a U.S. government-run facility or be turned over to family members until their immigration status is decided, officials said. REUTERS

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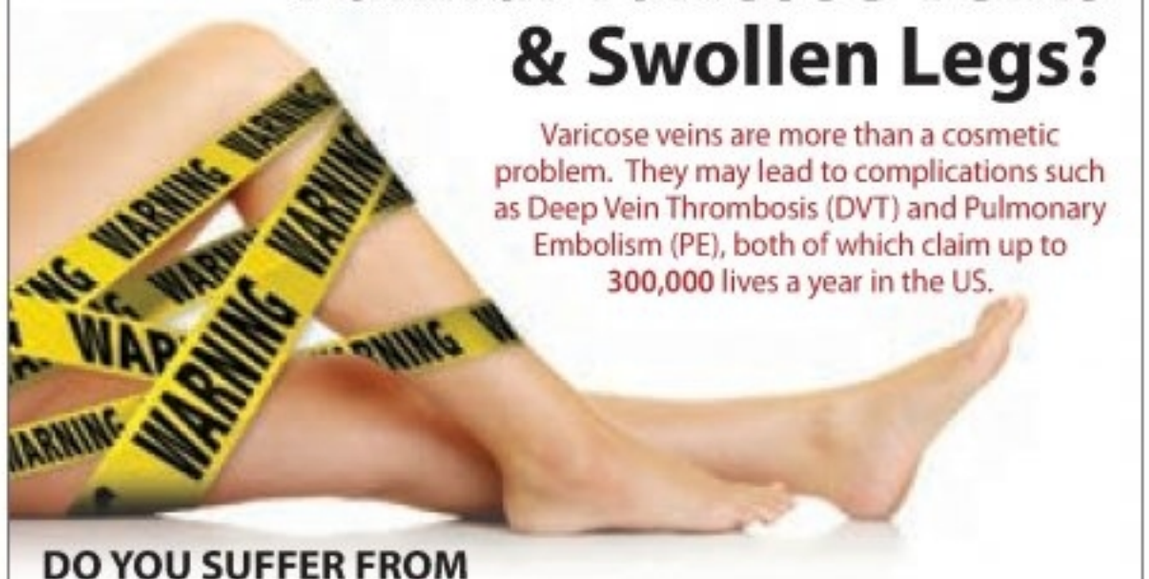

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THE TRUMPSPIRACY

TOM FOREMAN
Opinion
CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the new book "My Year of Running Dangerously."

Walk into a D.C. bar talking about UFOs, faked moon landings, or even the idea that Elvis is still alive and chillaxing in Belize and you'll get only stares. But bring up the conspiracy theory about Donald Trump, and you're in for a long night.

Here it is in a nutshell: Trump, with his polarizing statements and style, is not really running to win the White House. He is running to split the Republican vote, thereby guaranteeing that in the close election everyone expects, Hillary Clinton will win. Even those who may not fully buy into that fantasy are beginning to think this election could play out that way, prompting GOP candidate Carly Fiorina to say this week, "Donald Trump is Hillary Clinton's Christmas gift-wrapped up under a tree."

I'm not sure which tree she was talking about, but the first question any person would ask is "Why would he do this?" And the Trumpspiracists have an answer.

Trump was once a Democrat. He has donated to Republican candidates, but he's given plenty to Democratic contenders too. He has waffled on GOP cornerstone issues, and he constantly hints that he might run as an Independent. In other words, they argue, he's never been dedicated to the Republican Party — so why couldn't he be a Democratic sleeper?

What's more, they say, while he now spouts nasty lines about Hillary, it was not so long ago he was saying, "I like her, and I like her husband." The Clintons attended his wedding in 2005. Their daughters, Chelsea Clinton and Ivanka Trump, are pals for crying out loud! So desperate Republicans, baffled by Trump's staying power and terrified that he will shatter their election year hopes, find themselves wondering if somehow he is helping the Democrats dig a secret tunnel into the Oval Office.

There is no evidence to support this idea. But when things get weird, conspiracy theories run wild. And Trumpspiracists may not know much, but they know this race is as weird as they come.

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Walmart launches mobile wallet pay

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. launched its own mobile payment service, Walmart Pay, on Thursday, dealing a sharp blow to the ambitions of a mobile wallet the big-box behemoth was working on with other retailers.

Walmart Pay is a free service that will be available on Apple and Android devices. It will allow payments with any major credit, debit, prepaid or Walmart gift card, the company said.

The retail giant said Walmart Pay was developed independently, but it remains associated with CurrentC, the beta-stage mobile wallet Walmart had been developing with a consortium of retailers, as a possible addition to Walmart Pay.

CurrentC — whose developers included Target and Best Buy — was likely to prove strong competition to Apple's Apple Pay.

Walmart GETTY IMAGES

Walmart doesn't accept Apple Pay.

Walmart Pay requires customers to choose the payment option within the retailer's mobile app at a checkout counter, activate their phone camera and scan the code displayed at the register. An e-receipt is then sent to the app.

The service was introduced in select U.S. stores and is expected to available nationwide by the first half of 2016.

While the mobile-wallet market has gotten more crowded, with big players such as Alphabet Inc.'s Android Pay and Samsung's Samsung Pay, adoption by customers remains sluggish.

Analysts said they see the service as a positive for Walmart.

"[Walmart Pay] fits the trend of scale players in the payments ecosystem looking to control mobile payments by leveraging their content and high traffic apps," JP Morgan analysts wrote in a research note.

Walmart said in the future the service will allow adding other payment options.

REUTERS

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Connecticut to ban gun sales to people on watch lists

Connecticut would become the first U.S. state to ban the sale of guns to people on government watch lists under an executive order that Governor Dannel Malloy, a Democrat, said on Thursday he will sign.

The measure, which Malloy said needs federal approval, would require state police to review whether a potential gun buyer was on the federal no-fly list or on a watchlist for people suspected of ties to terrorism.

It would also revoke existing gun permits issued to people whose names were found on such a list.

The move follows a call by President Barack Obama for Congress to prohibit people on the no-fly list from purchasing firearms in the wake of the last week's massacre in San Bernardino, California, of 14 people by a married couple inspired by Islamic State militants.

"If you can't fly without clearing government watch lists, you shouldn't be able to buy a gun."
Malloy

"I am taking this common sense step with this executive order simply because it's the right thing to do," Malloy told reporters in Hartford.

State gun-rights groups were quick to criticize the move, which they said they

USS Zumwalt

The USS Zumwalt, a guided missile destroyer, makes its way past Bug Light in South Portland, Maine, Thursday, Dec. 10, 2015, on its way to the Ocean Gateway Terminal as part of its sea trials.
GETTY IMAGES

Gov. Dannel Malloy GETTY IMAGES

believe runs afoul of the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which protects the right to bear arms.

"I think it is downright dangerous and above and beyond what is constitutionally acceptable," said Scott Wilson, president of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League.

Almost three years ago a gunman killed 26 people, including 20 young children, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, one of the deadliest mass shootings in U.S. history.

Following that attack, Malloy pushed through one of the strictest gun laws in the United States, banning more than 100 types of military-style rifles and limiting ammunition magazines to 10 bullets.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest welcomed Connecticut's move but said that the Obama administration was determined to press ahead with federal action on guns, noting that people can travel across jurisdictions to circumvent local laws limiting firearm purchases.

"There are necessarily some shortcoming to that approach," Earnest told reporters at press briefing on Thursday. "That is why ... the president's commitment to keeping guns out of the hands of those who shouldn't have them continues to be a priority of his federal legislative strategy."

The ban would not have stopped the California attack as the shooters were not on any government terrorism watch list.

REUTERS

BRIEF

Armed suspect taken into custody at Arkansas State University

An armed man crashed a pickup truck on the campus of Arkansas State University on Thursday and was taken into custody by police after a standoff lasting about an hour, school officials and law enforcement said, adding no one was injured.

The university in Jonesboro, about 130 miles northeast of Little Rock, said in a statement the University was placed on a security lockdown after the suspect crashed the vehicle on campus.

"Man in custody at ASU. Officers in process of securing vehicle now," the Jonesboro Police Department said on its Twitter feed, without providing further details.

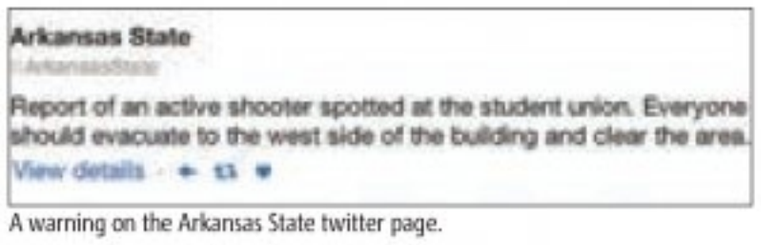
The school has kept the lockdown in place as police investigate the scene, it said on its Twitter feed.

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette published a photo of a pickup truck with an American flag flying from near the tail, saying it was the suspect's vehicle. The pickup is seen stopped near a walkway and by a paved area with tables and benches.

Other photos on social media showed the man brandishing a shotgun and draping what appeared to be a "Don't Tread on Me" flag on his truck.

The Jonesboro Sun reported police as saying the suspect had two propane tanks in the back of the pickup truck.

REUTERS


Arkansas State
Report of an active shooter spotted at the student union. Everyone should evacuate to the west side of the building and clear the area.
View details

A warning on the Arkansas State twitter page.

Chris Hemsworth, right, tries not to go down with the ship in "In the Heart of the Sea." WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Surf's up with *Chris Hemsworth*

wknd

THE FUN STARTS HERE

The "Thor" actor swears he didn't lose his lunch while filming "In the Heart of the Sea."

MATT PRIGGE
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Chris Hemsworth is Hollywood's go-to man's man — the hulk you call when you need someone to play "Thor," or send up his hypermasculinity in comedies like "Vacation" and the forthcoming "Ghostbusters" reboot.

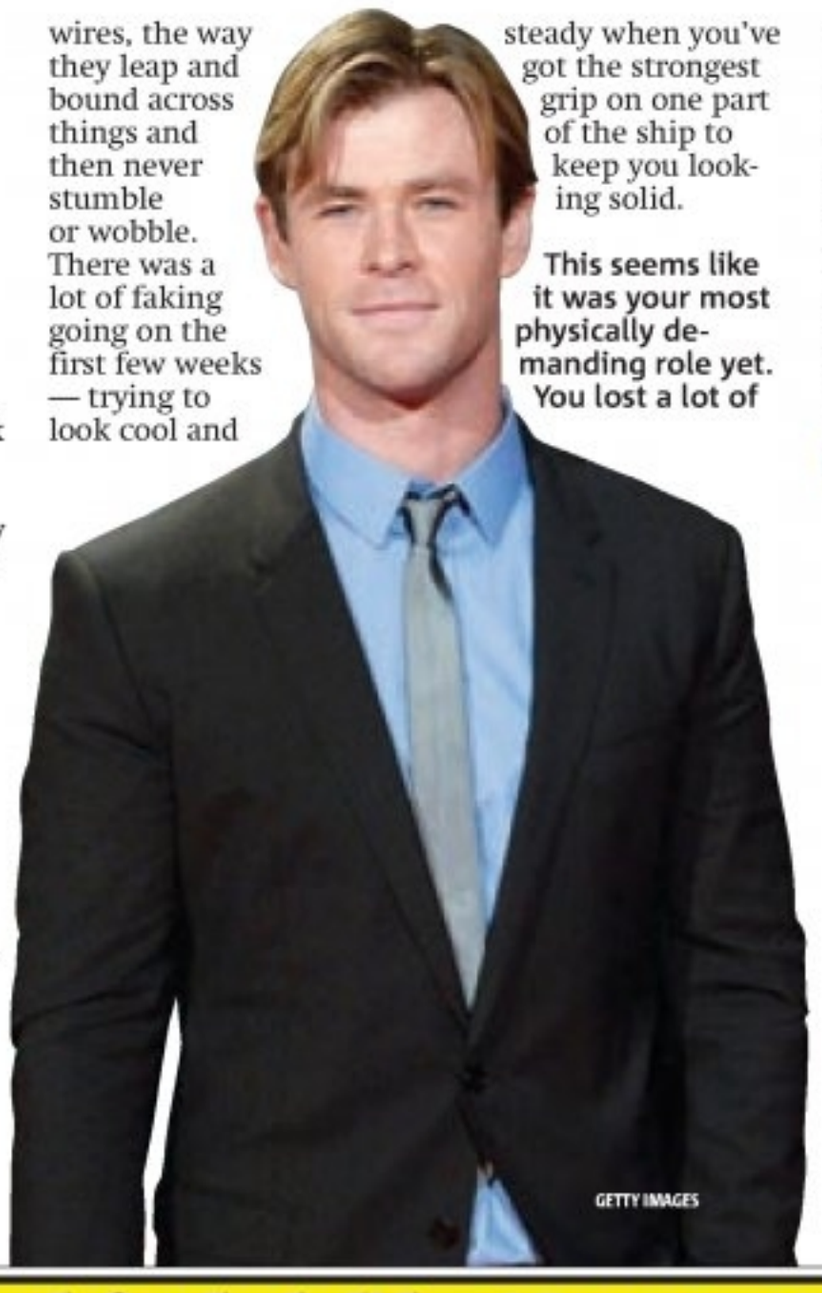
With "In the Heart of the Sea," he's called on to be even more macho than usual. Directed by Ron Howard, it tells the true story of the 1820 sinking of American whaling ship The Essex, which inspired Herman Melville to write "Moby Dick." He plays the first mate, who is among the survivors who spend months in lifeboats and had to turn to cannibalism to survive.

This was shot for two months in a massive swimming pool tank and another two months actually out at sea, off the Canary Islands. You don't get seasick, do you?

Seventy percent of the crew were throwing up that first week — like, solidly. I was lucky. I had taken all the seasick tablets we were told to take. But having been on the water most of my life — surfing, little bits of fishing — that probably prepared me for it. I just kept my eyes on the horizon, as they say, because I've been seasick before and it's the worst thing in the world.

How about your balance? A ship far out at sea isn't the most stable place.

As good as I thought my balance was, you watch people who do it every day just Peter Pan their way about the place. They look like they're attached to wires, the way they leap and bound across things and then never stumble or wobble. There was a lot of faking going on the first few weeks — trying to look cool and steady when you've got the strongest grip on one part of the ship to keep you looking solid.



GETTY IMAGES

This seems like it was your most physically demanding role yet. You lost a lot of weight for the part.

It was most real experience I've had shooting. There wasn't a lot of the off-switch. You were at sea all day or you were on the whale boats all day. You're just there. You get home and you're still not eating. Then there was dealing with the mood swings and chemical imbalance due to your low-calorie diet. You're in the sun, you're salty, you're wet. On one hand it was incredibly grueling. At the same time it added so much depth to all of our performances, because we were living and breathing that experience as much as possible.

Hunger games

How grueling was it playing someone who turns to cannibalism?

We were pretty damn hungry by the time we shot those scenes. [Laughs] The psychology behind that and that mind-set were things we talked about. At that point it's no longer about being hungry and satisfied; it's more about survival. Do you want to go home? Do you want to see your family? At what cost? Well, here it is. The bigger thing became about how do you deal with that when you come home and try to adjust back into a normal world and into society? If it meant seeing my kids again, then yeah.

We might like to think turning to cannibalism is something in the past. But the Uruguayan rugby team who crash-landed into a mountain — the story told in the film "Alive" — wasn't too long ago.

I remember watching that film at a very young age and thinking, "What would I do?" That's what I like about films and stories like that: they pose a question to you and you've got to think to yourself. It personalizes it.

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A very 'Robot Chicken' Christmas

Adult Swim's toy sketch smart-alecks do the holiday right.

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@Nedrick
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The Robot Chicken Nerd hits up the North Pole on "The Robot Chicken Christmas Special: X-Mas United," airing Sunday at midnight on Adult Swim. ADULT SWIM

Christmas is a time for family, for traditions and for … zombie elves? Apparently, if you're talking about Adult Swim's twisted "Robot Chicken" universe. The stop-motion animation series skewers some holiday classics with "The Robot Chicken Christmas Special: X-Mas United," and director Tom Sheppard and head writer Tom Root gave us a little preview.

What can you tease about this year's Christmas special?
Tom Sheppard: Well, we are breaking from our usual sketch format and actually doing a narrative story this time out.
Tom Root: This is the longest story we've ever told with the Nerd, so it was a lot of fun to be able to get out of our comfort zone and stretch out, tell a longer story.

How would you describe the tone for this special?
TR: It's actually kind of a sweet story because the Nerd is such a sweet character. There was the same nasty, nihilistic humor that we love doing, but the Nerd actually is a character you root for and you care about his feelings and want him to achieve his goals.

Were you inspired by any famous Christmas specials?
TS: We take shots at everything from "The Polar Express" to "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "Fred Claus." "Snowpiercer," "Planes Trains and Automobiles," with varying levels of love for those properties. Nothing says Christmas like "Snowpiercer."
TR: We made fun of a lot of things I've never seen, which is always a challenge. I've never seen "Fred Clause," but most of America probably hasn't, either.

Do you have any personal favorites in the Christmas genre?
TR: When I was a kid, my favorite Christmas special was always "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." I really liked the look of it, and it was my first introduction to stop-motion animation.
TS: I loved "Rudolph," too, but I have to say as an adult watching it — and we have a little bit of fun with this — Santa's attitude toward Rudolph in the special is not very nice. He basically calls him a freak until he finds that he can make use of his freakishness. So we have some fun with that.

Career longevity

"Robot Chicken" has been on for 10 years. Is that weird?
TR: It's actually year 15 for us, because we started the Web series in 2000. We really don't like to think about that. But it's been really rewarding to watch it grow. I love when interns come up and say, "I watched your show in junior high! It's what made me want to get into animation!"

Breckin Meyer, Tom Sheppard and Tom Root of "Robot Chicken." GETTY IMAGES

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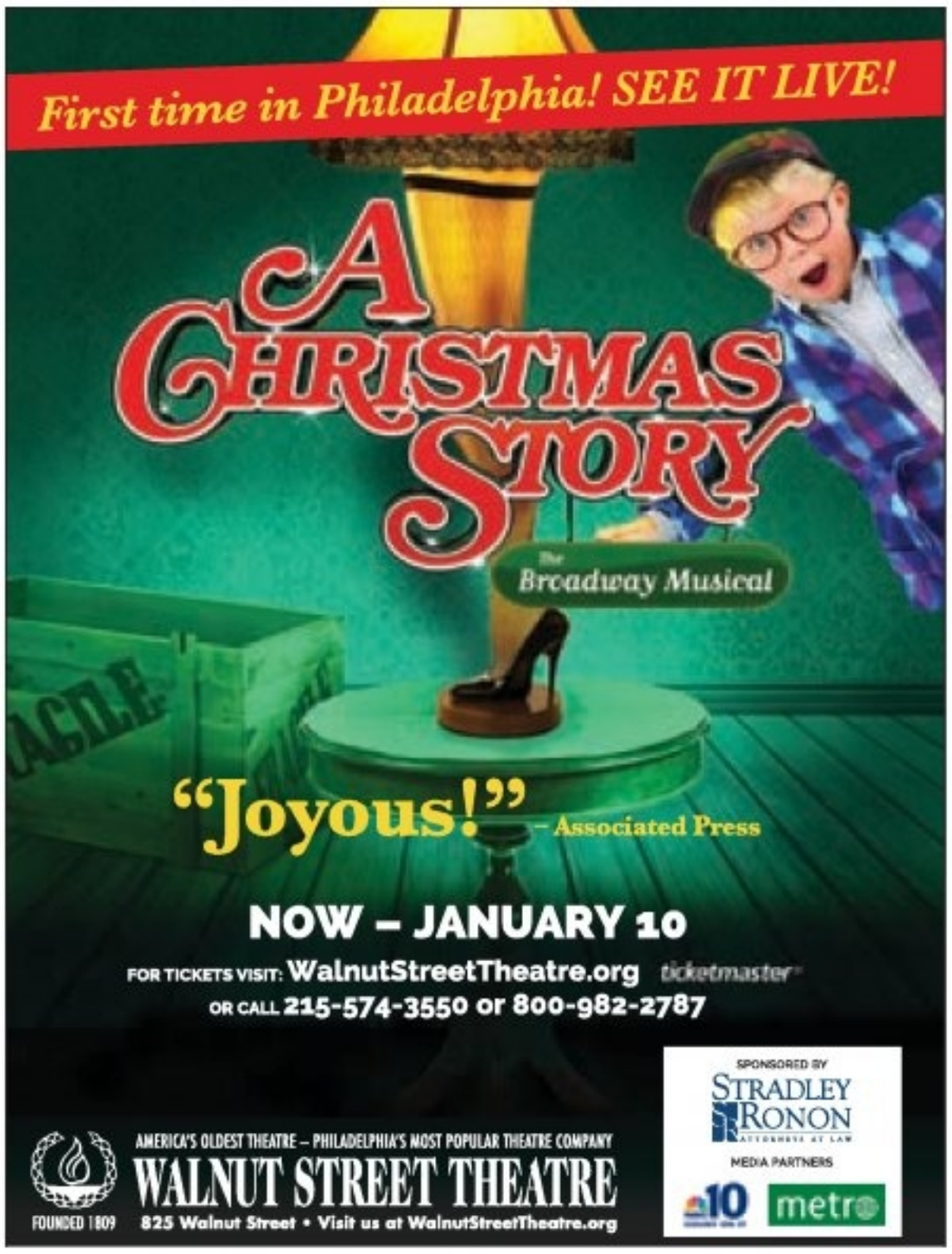
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"In the Heart of the Sea"

Director: Ron Howard
Stars: Chris Hemsworth, Cillian Murphy
Rating: PG-13

• • • • •

"In the Heart of the Sea" has whale attacks and sinking ships and men chowing down on men. But those are mere attention-nabbing distractions, especially compared to the literary classic this true tall tale inspired: Herman Melville's "Moby Dick." If "Sea" is one of those tiresome reminders of the real, not-as-interesting stories behind the myth, then at least it isn't one of those wan twists on immortal classics, a la "Pan" and "Victor Frankenstein."

Our hero is Owen Chase, played by Chris Hemsworth, the manly-manliest actor in cinema today. Owen is the first mate on the Essex, which has a massive quota of whale oil to fill, and when booty proves elusive, they head after a notorious mammal known for taking out ships. This doesn't go swimmingly.

Even with a third act segue into cannibalism, "Sea" goes tastefully PG-13, resorting to telling, not showing. It's too much of a Ron Howard movie, which means it's defiantly cornball even when things turn grim. And it's very 2015 in another way: It's not above falling back on slipshod CGI when it doesn't want to get too real. Still, at least there's Hemsworth, all old-school brawn and barked dialogue. He's often able to save the film with pure muscle. MATT PRIGGE

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Alicia Vikander and Eddie Redmayne play Gerde and Lili Elbe, the latter one of the first trans women, in "The Danish Girl." FOCUS FEATURES

"The Danish Girl"

Director: Tom Hooper
Stars: Eddie Redmayne, Alicia Vikander
Rating: R

• • • • •

As a film about one of the first cases of surgical gender reassignment, "The Danish Girl" is only so-so. As a breakup movie, it's downright radical. The story of Lili Elbe, played by Eddie Redmayne, is told with delicacy, empathy and not a small amount of monotony. The story of how Lili split ways with her ex-wife, Gerda (Alicia Vikander), is delicate but also sharp, insightful, quietly tough and maybe even profound about how love can last even after a good, devastating dumping.

It's the early 1920s when Gerda, then Einar, an esteemed painter, realized she finally felt more comfortable as a woman. For Gerda to stand in her way would be pure selfishness. But Gerda is still losing her soulmate, who even announces late in that Einar no longer exists — he's just a ghost, a figment to live on in their memories.

How to part ways with Gerda without destroying her is the only major dramatic hurdle Lili faces. There's the pioneering surgeries that will eventually take her life, but that just makes this a story of waiting for yet another doomed LGBT character to die a beatific death. "King's Speech" director Tom Hooper's overly tasteful images betray a lack of understanding of what it means to be trans, but the argument that letting someone go can be a form of deepest affection is nearly enough to justify its existence. MP

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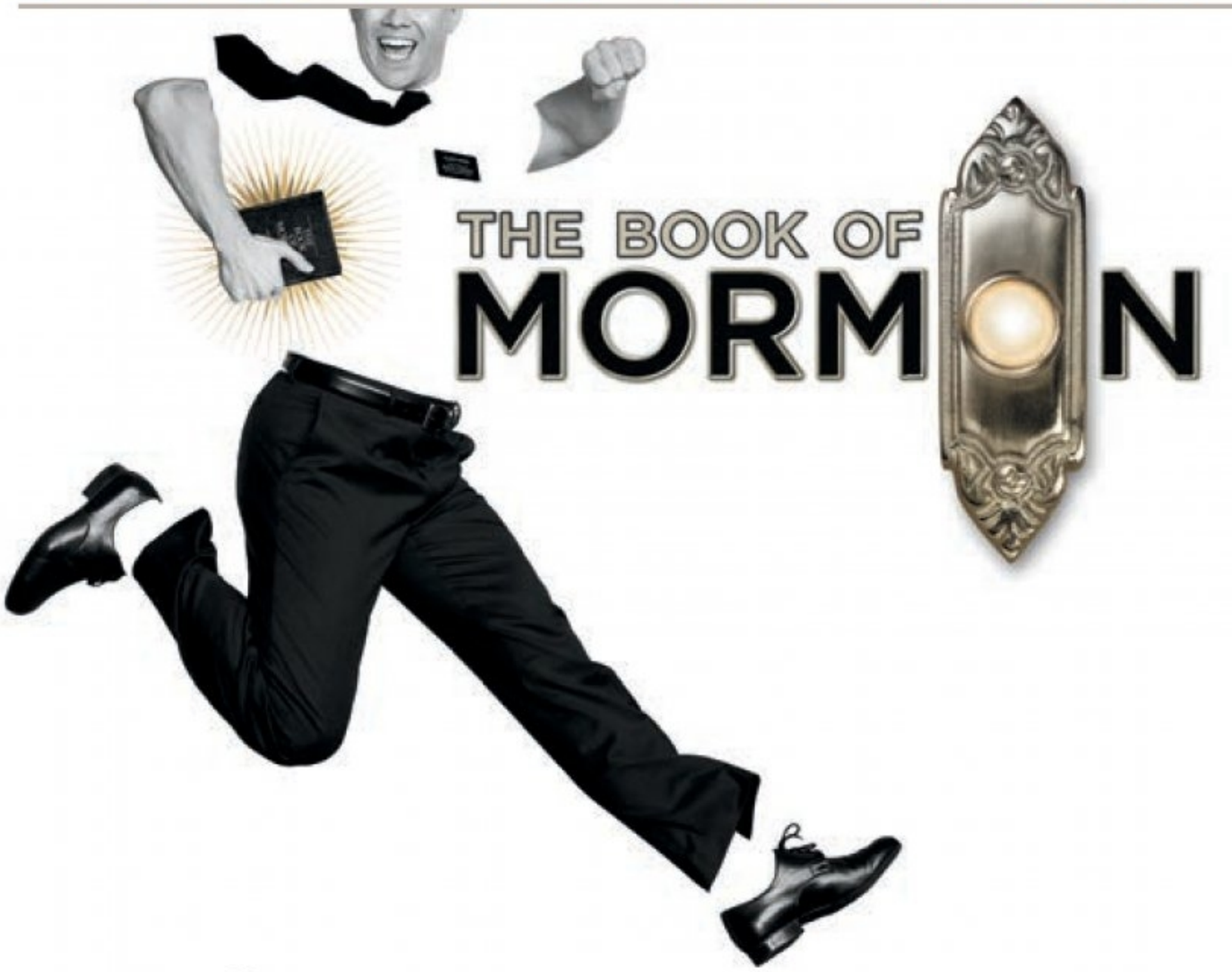

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Michael Fassbender takes a swing at playing Macbeth in the latest film version of Shakespeare's "The Scottish Play." THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

'Macbeth'

Director: Justin Kurzel
Stars: Michael Fassbender, Marion Cotillard
Rating: R

● ● ● ● ●

"Unconventional Director Sets Shakespeare in Time, Place Shakespeare Intended" went a particularly memorable Onion headline. Creatively unfaithful takes on the Bard have become so much the norm that it can seem bold the umpteenth film of "Macbeth" actually unfolds in 11th-century Scotland. But it goes one better. It's grimly realistic, filled with dilapidated castles, rickety shacks, overcast skies and deafening wind, on top of bloody, bloody violence, delivered early and often.

It sounds unique, but even this has been done before. Roman Polanski's 1971 film — made in the wake of the Manson murders — also went bleak-o-rama. But Polanski went with unknown actors, whereas director Justin Kurzel gives you a more conventionally conventional Shakespeare movie trope: established thespians, namely Michael Fassbender and Marion Cotillard, acting their hearts out as the Macbeths.

Do we demand too much of every Shakespeare film? Isn't there honor in propping up the classics, making sure audiences see a straight-up "Macbeth" and not one set in space or underwater (or, as in the comedy "Scotland, Pa.," in 1970s America)? Even if we spend chunks of "Macbeth" twiddling our thumbs, waiting to see how it will present very familiar plot points, there's a comfort food quality here. And it's not entirely by the books. Cotillard brings a rare vulnerability to the usually venal Lady Macbeth. This one justifies its existence by staying, at least spiritually, true.
MATT PRIGGE

The doc "Hitchcock/Truffaut" revisits the time in 1962 Francois Truffaut interviewed Alfred Hitchcock about his entire career (to that point). COHEN MEDIA GROUP

'Hitchcock/ Truffaut'

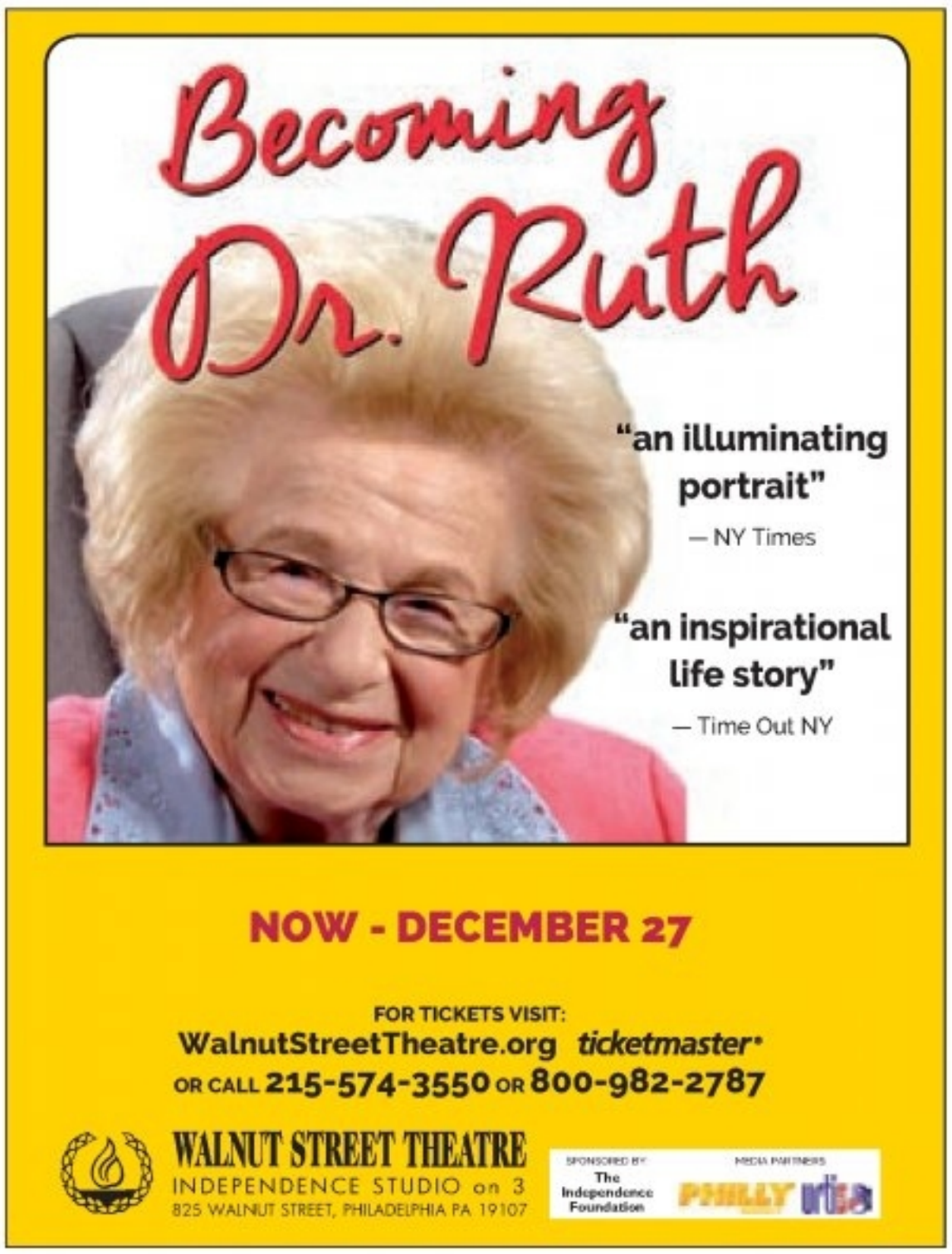
Director: Kent Jones
Genre: Documentary
Rating: NR

● ● ● ● ●

The pleasures of watching the new doc "Hitchcock/Truffaut" are similar to revisiting the old film canon — and to watching a clips-and-talking-heads doc made by someone with an insightful knowledge of a rich subject. Made by critic and New York Film Festival head Kent Jones, it revisits the epic, film-by-film chat between The Master of Suspense and his most ardent fan, filmmaker Francois Truffaut, who compiled their conversations into the classic, titular tome.

For Jones, their sessions are a springboard, a reason to look into a filmmaker's work from formal and thematic concerns rather than historical. With the aid of filmmaker fanboys (the most eloquent being David Fincher and James Gray), it weaves through studies of his style, of his Catholic guilt, even a debate about "Vertigo," the current Greatest Movie Ever, with even Martin Scorsese admitting the plot makes no sense (and that that doesn't matter).

And it shows as often as it tells. Often times in movies about movies, clips tend to be decorative. Here they're illustrative. Jones knows exactly which clips from which films to show and when. And he doesn't only stick to Hitchcock; he'll cut in relevant bits from Truffaut films, at one point to illustrate how they may be wildly different — Hitchcock controlled; Truffaut loose — but how Truffaut took some of his editing and sense of forward movement from Hitch. It makes you want to run to the bookshelf and crack open Robin Wood's "Hitchcock's Films Revisited," and much else besides. MP



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Eddie Redmayne's education

The Oscar winner learned a lot about the trans community when making "The Danish Girl."

MATT PRIGGE
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Eddie Redmayne is excited to be part of the transgender conversation. In his latest film, "The Danish Girl," the Oscar winner plays Lili Elbe, one of the first people to transition from male to female. "I hope this film can continue that dialogue," he says about the mainstream's recent acceptance of the trans community in films and TV shows such as "Tangerine" and "Orange Is the New Black."

Eddie Redmayne portrays Lili Elbe both before and after her transition in "The Danish Girl." AGATHA A. NITECKA

You were involved with this project for a few years before it was finally greenlit. That seems like it would give you extra time to research.
Exactly. When I was working with [trans director] Lana Wachowski [on "Jupiter Ascending"], I mentioned Lili and Gerda [her former wife, played by Alicia Vikander] to her, and she was incredibly passionate about her story. She pointed me to where I should start. Then I started meeting members of the trans community from different generations. Above and beyond the film, life-wise, it was an amazing thing.

What kinds of things in particular did you learn?
I'd always assumed that being transgender involved some form of physical transformation, and I realized that's absolutely not the case. It's entirely to do with what's in one's mind. All the women I talked to described how they had known from a very early age that they were a different gender than that which they'd been assigned at birth. What was important for me was that when Lili was living as Einar, she was uncomfortable in this guise. There was a drawing of Lili when she was living as a man. She had these high starched collars and this tailored suit. It almost looked like a scaffolding that she had put on herself as a consequence of trying to keep up this masculinity.

How did you feel when you first put on Lili's female attire?
The first time I came on set as Lili, the feeling of nervousness and scrutiny — the gaze of people looking at you — was unnerving. It was interesting because it resonated with what some of the trans women I'd met told me about going out early in their transition. But with them, it's coupled with the absolute fear of violence, whereas I was doing it in a completely safe environment. It was nothing compared to what trans people have to deal with on a day-to-day basis — the real threat of violence.

GETTY IMAGES

Changing times

Over the past few years, there has been an incredible tidal wave of awareness and support for the transgender community. In fact, this has happened in the midst of your involvement with this movie.
It's extraordinary. But what is dumbfounding to me, when I was first reading about Lili and Gerda's story, is they had to deal with violence and discrimination. This is almost 100 years ago. Nowadays, you can be fired in 31 states in America for being trans. The violence against trans women — especially trans women of color — is overwhelming. There's been a great acceleration of acceptance and real conversations in mainstream media, but it's taken such a long time, and there's so much more progress to go.

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Unit 1A19 Marcella P Cruger Refridgator Deep freezer clothes chair; Unit 1A20 Latoya Stroman Storage Bins / Household Items; Unit 1A57 Tamara Gay household goods; Unit 2A119 Lance Clark household goods; Unit 2A149 Michael A Garrison housegoods; Unit 2A180 Melinda Webster household goods and furniture; Unit 2A188 Lalinka Barrow 10x15 boxes and storage bins/ couple of bikes/ tools/maybe 1 dresser/; Unit 2A192 Sheldon Mann household items; Unit 2B241 Ricardo Walker household items; Unit 2A250 Joyce V Harris housegoods; Unit 2B267 Coby Sykes household items; Unit 2A30 William miller house good; Unit 2A66 Dawn Felton household goods; Unit 2A70 vincent white household goods; Unit 2B29 Patricia Clark household goods; Unit 2B31 Ebony Chisom household items; Unit 2B46 Charles Prophet Household goods; Unit 2B50 Sidney DeBlasio Sr household goods; Unit 2C33 Ella Walker storing clothing, suitcase, radio, tv; Unit 2C50 Shaneka Soloman household items; Unit 2C71 Farrah Samuels dinette set, entire dining room wood china cabinet table and buffet table with chairs; two mattresses with box springs, various household items and collectibles, artwork, brass wall mirrors, Lamps, etc; Unit 2D121 Lauren Williams-Lester general; Unit 2D253 Andrew Jones household; Unit 2D48 Taywanna (Tanya) Woods household items; Unit 2D53 Jamal El office supplies; Unit 2D60 Nykia Sims household goods; Unit 2E11 Joshua Nagel household goods; Unit 2E36 Regina Woodford household goods; Unit 2L02 Sakriyah Scott Dresser, 2 Tvs, Tall Jewlery Box, 2 stools, 2 tv stands; Unit 2L04 Eddie Bivens Jr 2 bags and a Box; Unit 3A06 Marcus Mitchell household goods; Unit 3A104 Gwendolyn Warren Household Items; Unit 3A201 Rijha Muhammad household goods; Unit 3A229 Claudell L Narcisse household items; Unit 3A271 Stacey Fisher household goods; Unit 3B06 Clinton Brown Jr fridge washer dryer boxes bedroom set; Unit 3B33 Felicia Kelly Household and Sale items; Unit 3B39 Darrell Reeves household items; Unit 3E15 Donnie Stivers Storage Bins; Unit 4A153 Charlenetta Brown 2 bedroom apartment furniture; Unit 4A171 Brian Thompson house hold goods; Unit 4A201 Shaquan Bell Sofa/love, Entertainment Center, Boxes, Bags; Unit 4A217 Delphine Robinson 0 couch, love seat, bunk bed frame, 2 tvs, 1 twin size mattress, boxes; Unit 4A32 Carmen Robinson boxes books summer supplies; Unit 4A35 Carmen Robinson household goods; Unit 4A36 Ruby Ford household; Unit 4A22 Kenny Hayward household; Unit 4E14 Cecelia Olivier household goods; Unit 4L38 Thomas Magnum household goods; Unit 0A60 Eugene Hayward car.

The auction will be listed and advertised on **www.storagetreasures.com**. Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property.

Going out on a ledge

Comedy duo Scharpling & Wurster entertain with characters like the Wawa-obsessed Philly Boy Roy.

SHAUN BRADY
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

See Jon Wurster and Tom Scharpling live Dec. 13 at Union Transfer (1026 Spring Garden St.). Tickets are $25 at 215-232-2100 or Utphilly.com. JASON MARCK

Tom Scharpling and Jon Wurster seem an unlikely comedy duo: Scharpling is a radio DJ, best known for his long-running "The Best Show," at first on WFMU and now online; Wurster is the founding drummer of indie-rock stalwarts Superchunk and also tours with the Mountain Goats and Bob Mould.

But the two carved out a unique comedic niche beginning in 1998, when Wurster called in to Scharpling's show purporting to be Ronald Thomas Clontle, author of a book called "Rock, Rot & Rule," passing judgment on every rock band imaginable. Seething listeners called to challenge the know-nothing know-it-all, recordings circulated, and a brilliant comedy team was born.

"We got so lucky during that first call, when Tom started getting calls from listeners who were really irate that this book could exist and how dumb I was," Wurster recalls. "It was kind of a perfect storm." Scharpling adds, "The only thing on my mind was, 'Please let this call be funny.' We were going out on a ledge, but it really worked."

In the years since, the pair has created dozens of characters: knowing parodies of fringe pop culture types like The Gorch, who claims to be the inspiration for Fonzie from "Happy Days" but is more violent sociopath than lovable delinquent; or Corey Harris, lead singer of the corporate-shilling rock band Mother 13.

"Being a touring musician helps a lot," says Wurster. "I'm in a new place every day, and every day I meet someone or see something happen that's insane. There's constant fodder for call ideas."

Enough so that the duo recently released a mammoth 16-CD box set, "The Best of The Best Show," compiling the funniest calls from their ever-growing catalog. While Wurster calls the process of assembling the set "pure torture," Scharpling gives it a more positive spin. "It was really satisfying to realize that we'd done this much comedy and there was so much of it that I was legitimately proud of. Not a lot of people get to look back and build a giant statue honoring themselves, which is I guess what we did."

Playing Philly

Now Scharpling & Wurster are translating their characters to a live show, which they'll bring to Union Transfer on Sunday. Among those likely to appear will be Philly Boy Roy, the heavily accented, Wawa-evangelizing local boy created by Harleysville native Wurster.

"Roy's based on a lot of people I knew growing up," he says. "I'll go back to Philly at least twice a year to play a show and it's always hanging in the air. There are Roys everywhere. I'll overhear them in a restaurant or a Wawa — it's the only town where that type of person lives, in my experience."

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On the Naughty List

The Peek-A-Boo Revue's annual cabaret is back to heat up the holidays.

MONICA WEYMOUTH
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

There's no shortage of ways to get into the holiday spirit in Philadelphia. You could stop by Macy's iconic light show before taking a stroll through Love Park's quaint Christmas Village, or watch a classic performance of the Pennsylvania Ballet's "Nutcracker."

Or, you could leave the kids at home and watch the city's finest burlesque performers shake it in the name of peace on Earth and goodwill toward men.

"Slay Bells," the Peek-A-Boo Revue's holiday cabaret, hits stages next weekend with the troupe's signature mix of naughty and nice, sugar and spice. We caught up with the lovely Ginger Leigh and Cherry Bomb to see what we can expect this year. (Spoiler alert: The Sugar Plum Fairy isn't on the guest list.)

Which carol makes the best striptease music?
One that bumps and grinds!

"Slay Bells" promises an appearance of the "Magic Man." Is it safe to say this isn't Santa?
You'll just have to come and find out what delightfully demonic figure we've pulled from ancient times.

What does Peek-A-Boo Revue want for Christmas?
To give our audience the best holiday show ever! And, of course, a lifetime supply of Swarovski crystals.

3 more can't-miss holiday shows

Matisyahu's Festival of Light
Friday, The Keswick Theatre
www.keswicktheatre.com
Reggae meets hip-hop meets Orthodox Judaism in Matisyahu, who's celebrating his breakthrough album, "Live at Stubb's."

A John Waters Christmas
Dec. 17, Union Transfer
www.utphilly.com
The filmmaker brings his cult-classic-in-the-making holiday show to Philly — expect the weird and wonderful.

The Martha Graham Cracker Cabaret's Solstice Spectacular
Dec. 21, FringeArts
www.fringearts.com
Philly's patron drag queen — as portrayed by Pig Iron Theatre co-founder Dito van Reigersberg — brings a healthy dose of glitter and sass.

If you go

The Peek-A-Boo Revue presents: "Slay Bells"
Dec. 18: The Trocadero
Dec. 20: World Café Live
www.peekaboorevue.com

Christmas fun has never been so delightfully naughty. COURTESY OF PEEK-A-BOO REVUE

Public Storage — NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Pursuant to the Pennsylvania Self Storage Act, Pennsylvania Statues, 73, Chapter 26, 1901 et seq., A Public Auction Will take Place on **12/23/15** at the below listed Public Storage Facilities for the follow units/Tenants. The Contents of which shall satisfy the Owners Lien. **Public Storage Located At, 2700 Grant Ave. Philadelphia PA 19114 at 11:00 AM (215) 698-8319.**

John Mcdevitt • Georganne Allsop • Donna Braitman
Andrea Fiorention-FLAVILLE • Shawnia Walton • Delphine Coleman
Chandra Faison • Andina Holmes • Lakisha Glasgow • Alphonso Monroe III

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PS Orangeco Inc. 701 Western Ave. Glendale California, 91201. PS ORANGECO, INC

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Angela Isbell, Ronald Frank, Alberto Pagan, Gurmeet Patheja, William Danbury, Patrick Mottershead, Donald Robinson, Renel Andres, Andrew Clark, Jennifer Dembowski

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Valerie Paluszynski • Jennifer Dawson • Francesca Warren • Kenneth Mariner
Angelique Leiber • Christina Lanza • Lyndra Spor • Darryl Boyd Sr • Anthony Carraccio
Terry Rogers • Heather Tansey • Dylan Morrisey • Edward Todd 3rd • Jennifer Dawson
Shawn Enggasser • Dorothy Thornton • Dorothy Thornton • Kenneth Everett

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1189 - Rogers, Myla • 1356 - KATZ, JASON • 2002 - Addison, Cyndell • 2030 - Fields, Sue
2090 - Firth, Robert • 2096 - Frazee, Lee • 3080 - Hall, Linda • 4066 - Jones, Kellianne
4068 - Downs, Matthew • 4116 - Lindsten, Scott • 4130 - Thompson, Ashley

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A036 - Gissendanner, Nadia • E285 - Wilkerson, Jourdan
F406 - Gamble, William • F438 - Rines, Wesley

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1572 - Murray, Chris • 2442 - Brodie Iii, Lionel

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1041 - Glover, Frank • 1058 - Howard, Jessica • 1121 - Harrington, Ashley
1204 - White, Craig • 1226 - Yeager, Daryl • 2065 - Walker, Nicole
3136 - Babb, Karen • 3226 - Scott, Ernest • D1026 - Little, Jason

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C117 - Santos, Joel • D011- Lucas, Ebony • D016 - Gingras, David
D041 - Hamilton, Judith • D158 - Mccall, Norman • D221 - Hujack, Amy
E062 - Szot, Lisa • E262 - Salvatico, John

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B035 - Mcelhone, Oliver • B102 - Gaines, Jacqueline • B172 - Dougherty, Timothy • B189 - Weiser, Holly
B199 - Peck, Rhonda • C089 - Leech, Jason • C107 - Terra, Kristin • C119 - Jernegan, Wayne
C122 - O'keefe, Kathryn • C170 - Delone, Jeff • C247 - Bard, Brendan • C263 - Jones, Constance

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A504 - Bove, Jennifer • A606 - Phillips, Katie
B933 - Greene, Jojo Maurice

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A006 - Jamie, Elizabeth • A097 - Gill, Catrina • A106 - Jetter, Denise • A113 - Bellamy, Alexis • A139 - Rios, Shenika • A143 - Daniels, Steve • A150 - Howard, Latifah
A177 - Smith, Brenda • B275 - Clement, Annette • B282 - Torres, Christine • B317 - Johnson, Yolanda • B338 - Williams, Marcus • B352 - Glover, Nyema
B363 - Mason, Jackson • B392 - Gray, Geraldine • B419 - Brown, Lamar • B450 - Custer, Latosha • B472 - Sorrells, CC • B479 - Bourgeois, Monique
B502 - Smith, Zaphiyah • B516 - Watson, Shellie • B520 - Anderson, Terri • B545 - Evans, Shakira • B547 - Whitaker, Lorraine • B563 - Wilson, Cathleen
C591 - Williams, Aliya • C623 - Brookins, Robin • C644 - Harris, Randel • C720 - Slade, Mallory • C746 - Mckering, Lionel • C784 - Williams, Keenan
C787 - Cornwell, Nadine • C856 - Anderson, Edna • C915 - McDermott, Shawna • C929 - Harrison, Kristen • C935 - Graham, Delores • C960 - Davis, Dana

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A140 - Nixon, Shonda • A208 - Brooker, Tchala • A216 - Gripper, Naima • B432 - Parham, Stacey
B444 - Hargrove, Shakia • D814 - Green, Gilbert • D820 - Green, Neftale • D834 - Mccain, William
E1014 - Ates, Shenetha • E914 - Lawson, Nicholas • E934 - Settles, Tonya • E946 - Morgan, Audrey
E949 - Betts, Ikea • E952 - Harvey, Willie • F1119 - Conway, Joy • F1121 - Theanabe, Kristen
F1209 - Stewart, Walter • F1279 - Fitch, Summer • G1349 - COLLINS, RENEE • H1623 - Brown, Thomas

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Prospects good enough to pry '100 Miles Giles' from Phillies

The Phillies decided the Astros' offer of pitching talent was too good to turn down in exchange for closer Ken Giles.

ED CONDRAN
@MetroPhilly
sports@metro.us

The Matt Klentak era is off to an impressive start. The Phillies new general manager did something Ruben Amaro failed to accomplish during his long, lamented run: trade a player at his peak. That's arguably what Klentak pulled off when he dealt young closer Ken Giles to the Astros.

Starting pitching is the currency of the game. Relievers are primarily enigmatic. Klentak picked up three young starters for Giles and an outfielder with a potent bat. Will they pay dividends? We'll see.

The flame-throwing seventh-round pick from the 2011 draft has netted the Phillies right-hander Vincent Velasquez, southpaw Brett Oberholtzer, right-hander Thomas Eshelman and outfielder Derek Fisher.

Velasquez made his big league debut last season after pitching exceptionally well in Double-A.

Velasquez, 23, who has a fastball which sits in the mid-90s, projects as a No. 3. He dominated last season at Double-A and was then promoted to the show, where he struck out 58 in 55 2/3 innings and posted a 4.37 ERA.

Velasquez will have an oppotunity for either a slot in the Phillies rotation or hone his skills in Triple-A, where he has yet to throw a pitch.

Ken Giles had 16 saves for the Phillies in two seasons in the bullpen. GETTY IMAGES

Oberholtzer, 26, has a good chance of earning a spot in the rotation next season. Oberholtzer doesn't post sexy numbers. His 3.94 ERA with 5.9 K/9 and a 2.1 BB over 42 starts is hardly spectacular but Oberholtzer is a ground-ball pitcher.

Fisher, 21, could have the most upside of the acquisitions. The Lebanon product has plus, plus power, which has yet to fully develop along with plus speed. Fisher impressed splitting the season between Class-A and Class-A Advanced, hitting .275/.364/.483 with 22 homers and 31 stolen bases.

Eshelman, 21, is intriguing. The second-round pick out of the 2015 draft class doesn't throw hard but his precision is uncanny. As a college hurler at Cal-State Fullerton, he issued 0.44 walks per nine innings, which is beyond off the charts. Greg Maddux posted a 1.79 mark and he was the greatest control freak of the modern era. Sure, college ball and the majors are different animals, but Eshelman reportedly has total control over five pitches.

"The Phillies impressed with their haul for Giles," an AL executive said. "They didn't get [Astros top pitching prospect Lance] McCullers [Jr.] but they got Velasquez, who has a live arm and good upside, Oberholtzer, who is a back end starter and I really like the potential Fisher has. The Astros really needed a power arm who could get the job done at the back end of the bullpen and the Phillies made them pay."

Roster moves

- Phillies GM Matt Klentak signed David Hernandez, 31, to a one-year, $3.9 million deal. Hernandez, 31, might close for the Phillies.
- The Phillies selected Tyler Goeddel with the first selection of the Rule 5 draft. Goeddel, 21, was the 44th overall pick in the 2011 draft. The speedy outfielder had a solid season in AA last year hitting .279 with 12 homers, 28 steals and a .783 OPS.

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TIME FOR THE SPRINT

FANTASY SPORTS

ADAM LEVITAN
alevitan@metro.us

LeGarrette Blount may not be the best option in the playoffs. GETTY IMAGES

Whether you've earned a bye in your league's playoffs or not, it's worth thinning out your bench depth in favor of streamers and handcuffs right now. We are no longer fortifying for the marathon of a fantasy football season — we are getting our rosters ready for a sprint.

Defensive chess

There's merit to carrying as many as three defenses through the playoffs. Most important, we can look ahead to Weeks 15 and 16 and add the units that will be in the best matchups. For example, the Bucs aren't a defense I'd use against the Saints this week, but I would hold them for a potential fantasy semifinal game against the Rams' inept offense. The same can be said for the Bengals, who take on the Steelers' juggernaut this week yet get the fighting Blaine Gabberts in Week 15.

Handcuffing FTW

Part of getting ready for the playoffs is preparing for worst-case scenarios. Ask yourself what would happen if X stud on your team got hurt this week while you're on a bye? Is his backup better than an option you currently have on your bench? There's far more value in Doug Martin owners holding Charles Sims than keeping someone like LeGarrette Blount on the bench.

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2007 Jeep Liberty — 4WD, Roof Rack, Privacy Glass — As low as $199/*Month
2007 Pontiac G6 GT — Hard Top Convertible, Leather, Low Miles — As low as $189/*Month
2009 Dodge Charger SXT — Moon Roof, Low Miles, One Owner — As low as $189/*Month
2007 Cadillac SRX — 3rd Row Seats, Moonroof, Leather — As low as $189/*Month
2007 Chrysler Town & Country — Stow N Go Seats, TV-DVD, Moonroof — As low as $189/*Month
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3 Things to watch for as Eagles welcome McCoy, Bills to Linc

The Eagles are again in the thick of things in the NFC East.

EVAN MACY
@evan_macy
evan.macy@metro.us

It's a brand-spanking-new season for the Philadelphia Eagles.

With four games to go (and two of them against division foes the Redskins and Giants), the Eagles are mired in a four-way tie for the futility that is the NFC East lead.

If the Eagles win out, they win the division. If they win against the Redskins and Giants in Week's 16 and 17, they probably win the division too. Sunday's game against the Bills, (the Eagles are 7-1 against their last 8 AFC opponents) has no tie-breaker value, but is 25 percent of their remaining schedule.

At home again at the Linc, Philly welcomes Rex Ryan's ferociously blitzing defense, a potent offense led by former Bird LeSean McCoy and yet another mobile quarterback to fend off in Tyrod Taylor.

Here's what we'll be watching for in Sunday's Week 14 battle.

The Eagles' defense will have its hands full against their former teammate on Sunday, a 1 p.m. kickoff on Fox. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

1 Return of the king

Shady McCoy is the Eagles all-time leading rusher and was shipped to the Bills in exchange for linebacker Kiko Alonso this spring in a move that surprised everyone.

"I was shocked, surprised," running back Kenjon Barner said, recalling his learning of the trade. "A guy like that doesn't come around that often."

McCoy will certainly be at his best Sunday, and looking to tear through a run-defense that he not only knows very well, but one that has allowed 124.7 yards per game, 27th of 32 defensive units in the NFL.

McCoy, after an injury-riddled slow start, has 792 yards on the year.

2 Playoffs start now

The Eagles need to essentially play as if the playoffs start this week.

Though the team is tied for first, they are tied with two teams for the division lead, and boast a subpar 5-7 record.

"If somebody told me we would be in first place I'd believe them," Malcolm Jenkins said, going on to note that no one expected two games below .500 would be enough to top a division.

"We've had about five second chances. I think at this point, with four games left in the season, being in December at the end of the day, however we got here, we are right where we want to be. ... This is that month where good teams separate themselves."

3 Very special returns

The Eagles scored three non-offensive touchdowns last week, continuing a trend that exploded last season.

In the history of the franchise, the Eagles have scored 11 touchdowns via blocked punt returns. Four of those have come in the last two seasons (with one of course coming against the Patriots last week).

The Eagles also have three pick sixes this year. These contributions help to alleviate the pressure on the offense to stay on the field, and on the defense to keep opponents from scoring. It's a tall order, but if the Eagles can expand their turnover differential (23 takeaways and 22 giveaways) it will certainly play a role in leading them to victory.

Byron Maxwell's second interception of the year came against Tom Brady last week.

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Kelly apologizes for handling of McCoy trade

Chip Kelly says he holds no animosity toward LeSean McCoy, even after his allegations of racism. CHARLES MOSTOLLER

The Eagles' head coach owned his mistake for the disrespectful way the Birds' all-time rushing leader was traded last spring.

EVAN MACY
@evan_macy
evan.macy@metro.us

One day last March, the Eagles all-time leading rusher, LeSean McCoy, went to sleep confidently knowing he was returning to play for the only NFL team he's ever known.

The next morning, he woke up and was a Buffalo Bill.

There was no one involved in last offseason's swap of McCoy for linebacker Kiko Alonso, save for perhaps Chip Kelly and Rex Ryan themselves, who was not shocked by the trade.

It left an utterly bitter taste in McCoy's mouth — one that still lingers months later.

Finally, Chip Kelly is showing some remorse. Not for the trade itself, but for how things went down.

"How he was traded, it wasn't handled right," Kelly said. "It's a lesson [of what] we should never do, to be honest with you."

Kelly said the trade did not go the way most do, where he has the chance to inform the players involved over the phone before the story breaks in the media. He told reporters Thursday that he went to bed the night of the trade expecting it to be finalized in the morning. By then, the story had broken.

"We have a way that we do it that I think is the right way to do it, and it wasn't exercised in that case," Kelly said. "I understand why he was bothered. He was an all-time leading running back here, thought he was disrespected and was wronged. Because I was part of it, that's on me.

"I would apologize for that. It didn't happen the right way."

The traded opened up the cap space to sign DeMarco Murray and Ryan Mathews, while also bringing a stud linebacker in Alonso.

> *"I think we did the right thing at the time."* Chip Kelly

"From a business standpoint I get it," Malcolm Jenkins said, explaining he too was shocked when he first heard about the trade. "If you look at the money issues and all the space it created, it makes sense."

The questions for Kelly came a few days after McCoy told reporters in Buffalo he had no intention of shaking his former coaches hand before or after Sunday's 1 p.m. game.

"I understand where he's coming from," Kelly said. "If he doesn't want to shake my hand, I understand that. But I'll always shake his hand. If he extends his hand, I'll always shake his hand. I have great respect for him as a player.

Another week, another FanDuel millionaire

This week's big winner was Okieboy211, who had shares of two main cogs in the Titans/Jaguars slugfest. This week's contest came down to the last seconds of Monday Night's game and was won by a field goal.

Roethlisberger

The 45-10 pounding Pittsburgh handed the Colts Sunday night was music to fantasy owners ears. Big Ben threw for a whopping 364 yards and 4 TD's. Roethlisberger is undoubtedly one of the best fantasy QB's out there. 16.6% OWNED, 33.86 FANDUEL POINTS (FDPS)

Allen, Johnson

Javorius Allen's value came from his surprising 107 receiving yards Sunday. He also rushed for 63 and had a receiving TD. David Johnson is playing for a Cardinal team that's in a groove right now and he's picked up right where Chris Johnson left off since going down with an injury. JAVORIUS ALLEN: 7.3% OWNED, 29 FDPS DAVID JOHNSON: 30.3% OWNED, 19 FDPS

Brown, Robinson, Bryant

We're running out of superlatives for Antonio Brown. Sunday night he put on another show with 8 catches for 118 yards and two touchdowns. Oh, and he also returned a punt for a TD as well. ANTONIO BROWN: 29.3% OWNED, 33.8 FDPS, ALLEN ROBINSON 9.9% OWNED, 38.3 FDPS, MARTAVIS BRYANT: 14.7% OWNED, 19.4 FDPS

Walker

Delanie Walker is on a roll. This was his third straight game with 12 or more FanDuel points and 90 or more yards receiving. Clearly he and rookie QB Marcus Mariota have a strong connection developing. DELANIE WALKER: 12% OWNED, 19.2 FDPS

Bailey, Chiefs D

DAN BAILEY, K: 2.3% OWNED, 15 FDPS, KANSAS CITY CHIEFS DEFENSE: 2.4% OWNED, 17 FDPS

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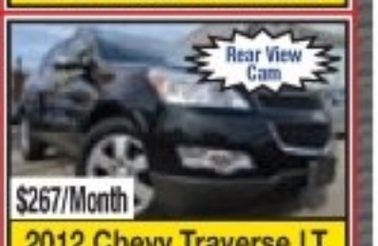

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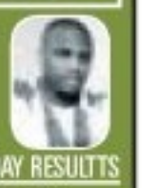

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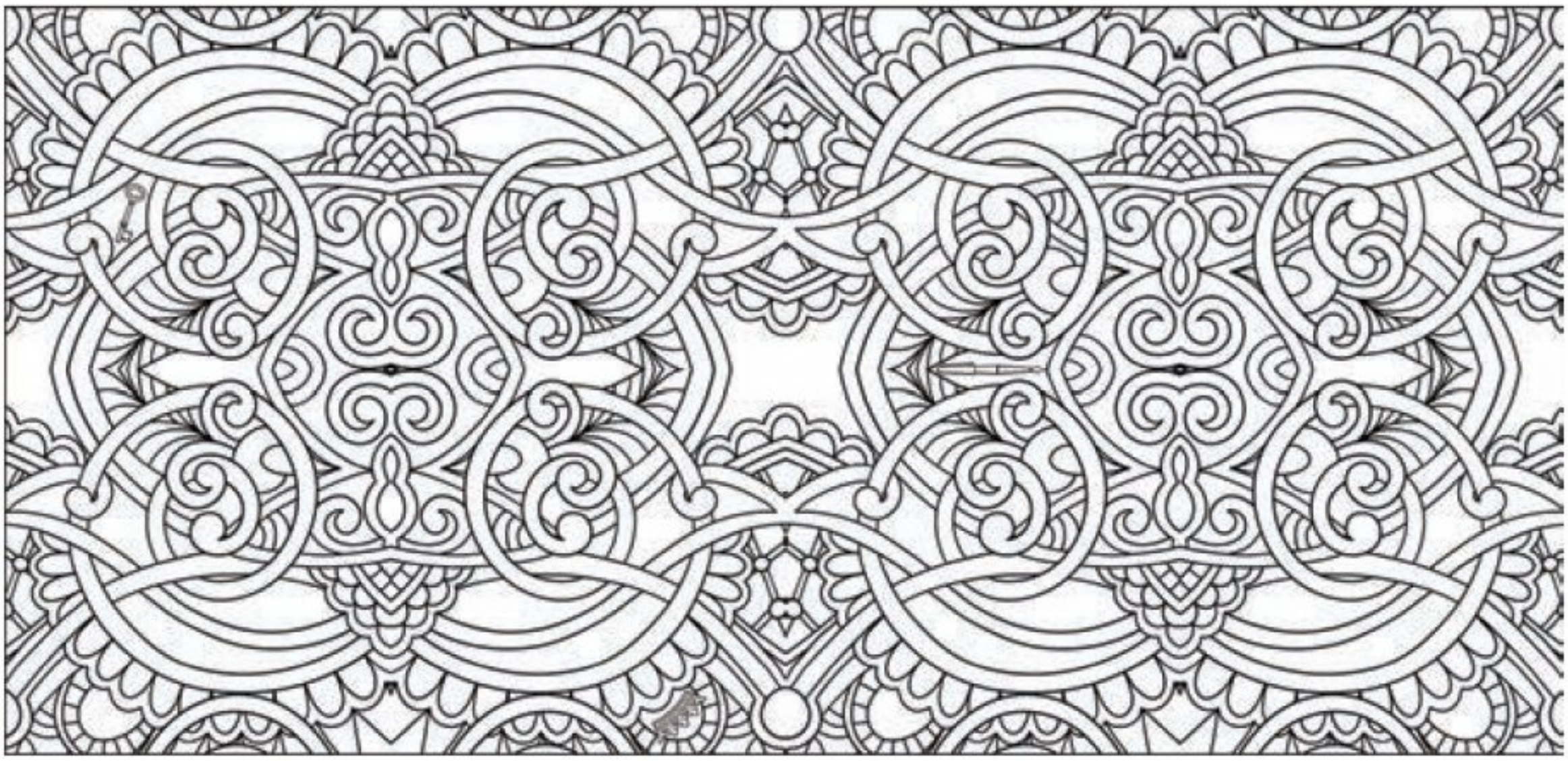

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Across

1 Employs
5 Cellar, briefly
9 Wind resistance
13 Caesar's garb
14 Polished off (2 wds.)
16 Country cousin
17 Slugger Moises —
18 Full of flavor
19 Shaman's finding
20 "Bonanza" brother
21 Long sigh
22 Rumple
24 Bede of fiction
26 Thick carpeting
27 Drive-in order
30 Socks and shirts
34 Wan
35 Rather you — me
36 Cat's-paw
37 Help the merchant
38 Jedi allies
39 Tijuana aunt
40 Humorist — Bombeck
42 Tarzan's transport
43 Ascertain
45 Kind of bee
47 Ordered around
48 —-de-camp
49 Elvis swiveled them
50 Digress
53 Large green parrot
54 Relieve tension
58 Kind of rug
59 Hits dead-center
61 Soir follower
62 Thin coating
63 Kind of role
64 Druid
65 Hooray for me! (hyph.)
66 Many August people
67 "Mack the Knife" singer

Down

1 Four Corners state
2 Recital piece
3 They're often inflated
4 Bacon alternative
5 Rummage sale
6 Mirror fogger
7 Chicken wire
8 Noted mummy
9 Crop threatener
10 Cuba exports
11 I.W. or Walter
12 Kind of pool
15 Jungle crushers
23 Feedbag tidbit
25 Bear's refuge
26 Allay, as thirst
27 Naive ones
28 Seize power
29 Limerick, e.g.
30 Cheech's partner
31 Specks
32 Bete –
33 Adrenal, for one
35 Strong cord
38 Obvious
41 The Crimson Tide
43 Prune
44 Soul
46 Mae West role
47 Slants
49 Phone response
50 Ride the rapids
51 Opera tune
52 Canasta play
53 Franklin's flier
55 "The Mammoth Hunters" uthor
56 Housecat's perch
57 Jazzy – James
60 Feel crummy

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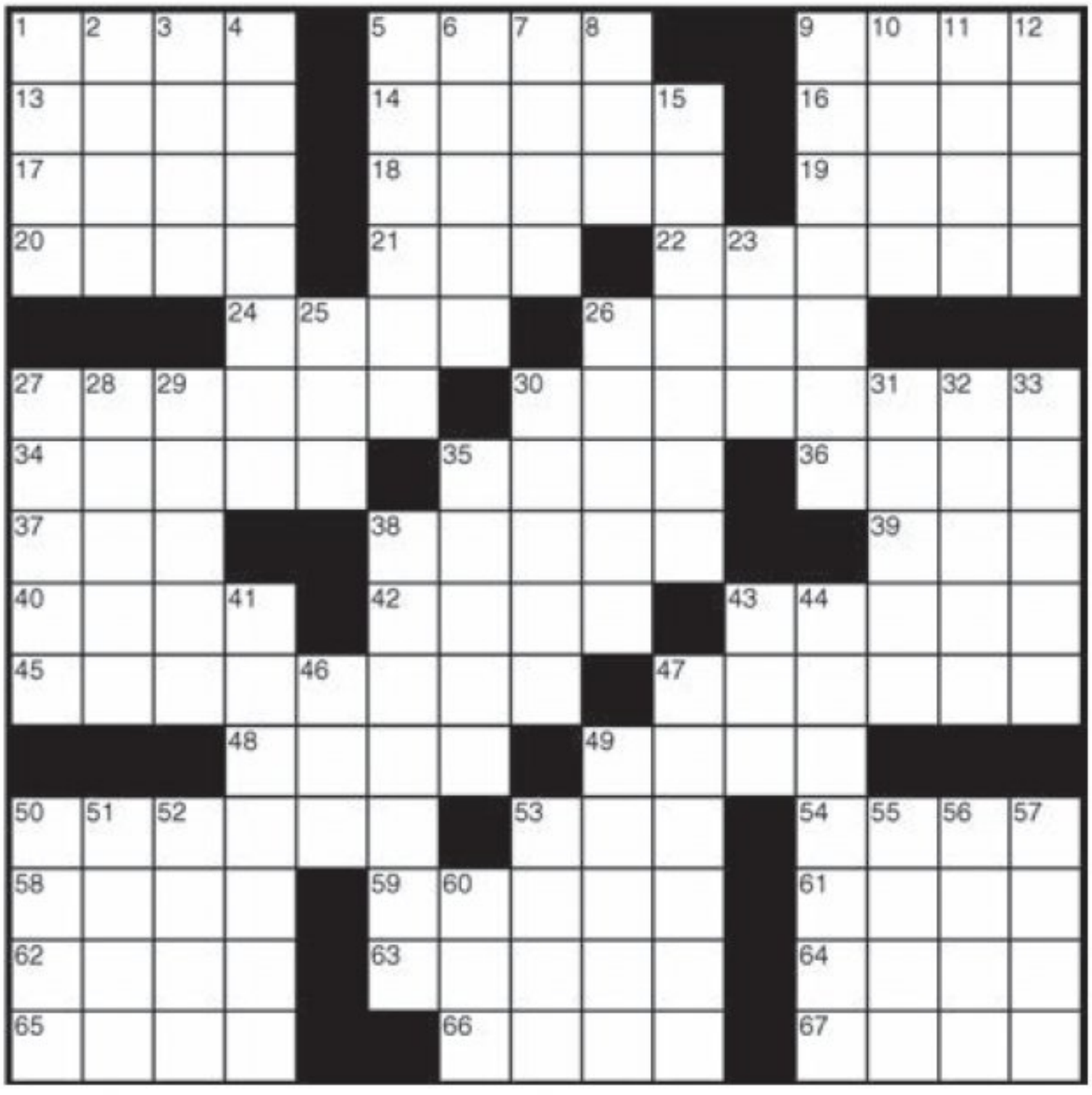

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Aries Taking a trip or signing up for a retreat, educational course or anything that will broaden your outlook will lead to a positive change.

Taurus Take a close look at your situation. As long as you take a practical approach, success will follow. Romance is encouraged.

Gemini A make-it-or-break-it situation will arise between you and someone you have shared personal information with. Be careful what you say.

Cancer Speak out about how you see things unfolding. Your progressive action will attract attention and enhance a personal relationship.

Leo Your go-getting attitude will inspire those around you to pitch in and help. Plan a small trip with a special someone.

Virgo Keeping a steady, consistent attitude will help you cope with the unpredictable nature of those around you.

Libra You are best off keeping moving until you are satisfied that you have everything in its place. Idle time will lead to conflicts.

Scorpio Engage in activities and events that encourage you to try new things, and gain depth through the experience you encounter.

Sagittarius Keep everyone guessing until you are fully prepared. Finishing things should be your concern, with discipline helping you.

Capricorn If you want to share, do so in an expressive manner. It's how you present what you believe or do that will capture your audience.

Aquarius Look for the best way to bring about positive change, and make it happen. Don't exhaust yourself because you are too proud to ask for help.

Pisces Ensure that all your papers are in order. Love is highlighted, and money or a gift will come to you from an unexpected source. EUGENIA LAST

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easy

8				2		7		
	1	9			5	3		2
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		5		8				9

hard

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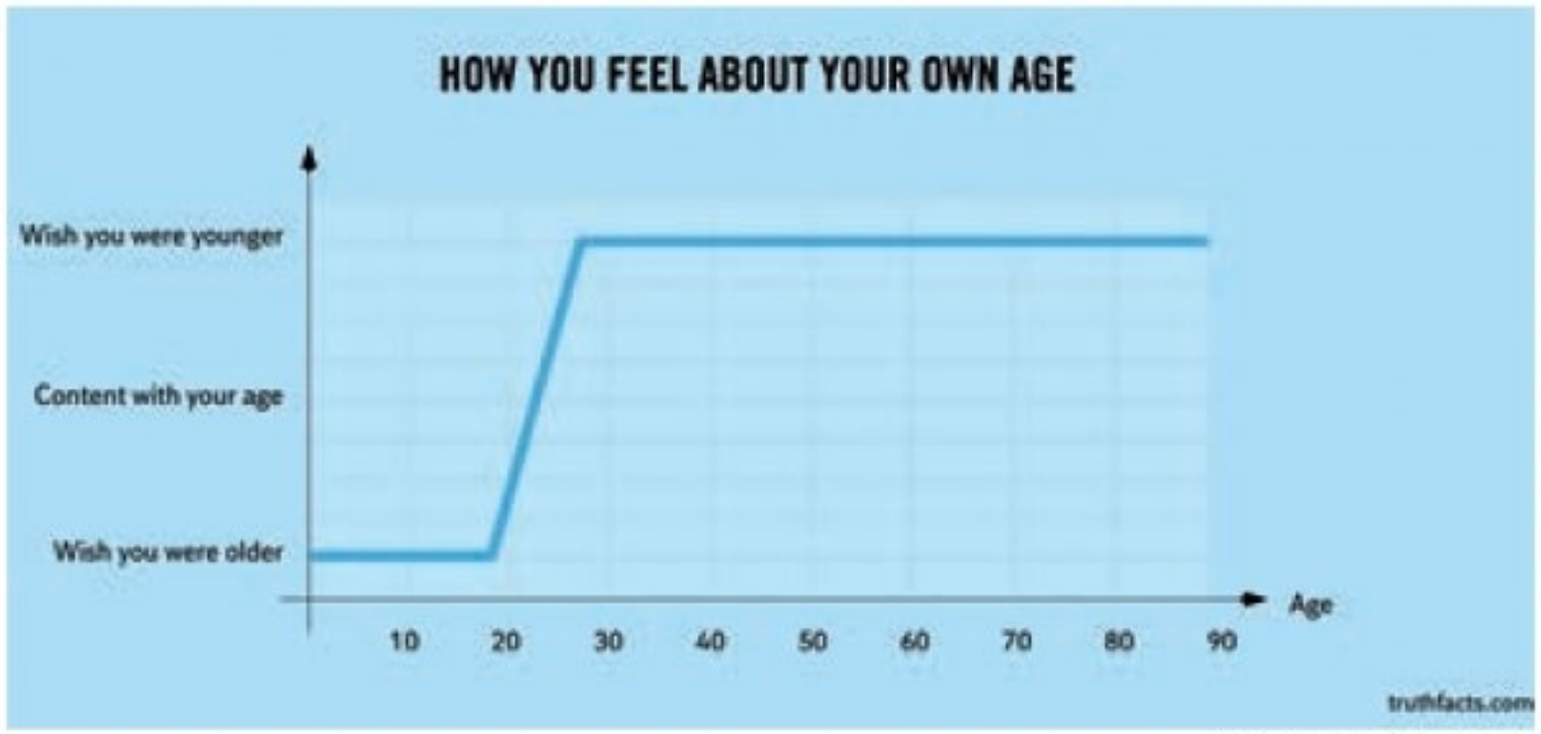

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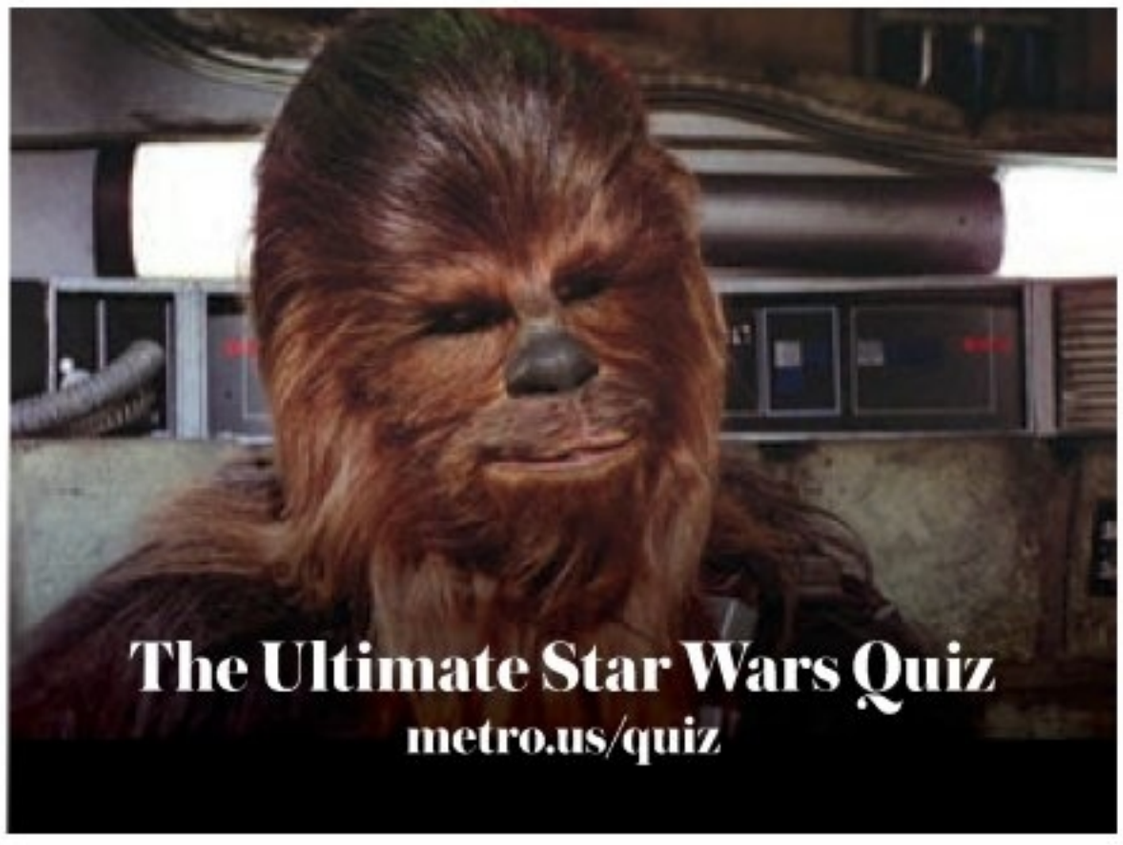

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